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PP RUEHG1 RUEHMA RUEHROV
DE RUEHKH #0454/01 0870843
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 270843Z MAR 08 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0321
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0117
RHMFIS/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000454

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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DEPT FOR AF/SPG, S/CRS, AF/C
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: UNAMID TRIES HARDER WHILE DARFURIS FUME

¶11. (SBU) SUMMARY: March 25 visits to two UNAMID camps in Darfur revealed that UNAMID troops, while bringing much needed relative security to their immediate areas of control, currently lack the troops and equipment to be in some of the most operationally-important areas. The visits also revealed disparity between UNAMID's analysis of security and that of many of the internally displaced persons (IDPs). Local populations and UNAMID staff did agree, however, that the continued presence of janjaweed and their integration into Sudanese security structures damages IDP's faith in law enforcement, judicial systems, and their overall perception of the feasibility of improvements that UNAMID hopes to bring to Darfur. END SUMMARY.

¶12. (U) On March 25 emboffs traveled to Mukjar and Zalingi to conduct an inventory of high-end items (vehicles, generators, armored personnel carriers, etc.) for rotating Rwandan peacekeeping battalions. Emboffs will continue through March 30 conducting such inventories at base camps where Rwandans are located. (Note: The results of the inventory will be sent via e-mail to interested parties. At the end of the week-long inventory, septels on logistics and an overall assessment of UNAMID at the field level will follow. End Note).

"WE NEED TO GET OUT THERE"

¶13. (SBU) Although Mukjar base commander T. Kareiou said that the immediate area around his UNAMID camp is secure, he stated that his troops are not able to visit the most operationally important areas in their sector. Kareiou stated that in particular there has been decreased security in the town of Um Dukhum on the Sudanese-Chadian border. Kareiou stated that he needs access to helicopters to get to some of the most difficult and important areas under his mandate such as Um Dukhum. He said that in his four month tour he has only visited this area one time. "We need a UNAMID camp like this one in Um Dukhum and then we could really make a difference and have a sense of what is going on" said Kareiou. According to Kareiou, Um Dukhum has been used as a staging ground for the supply and training of Chadian opposition rebels by the Sudanese Government and that the region has become increasingly militarized and dangerous.

¶14. (SBU) Nigerian civpol chief Adewuyi also separately reported that "we are thin on the ground." He stated that he does not have sufficient men to have a presence in some of the IDP camps under his control with a population as large as 90,000. "It will take much time and will require more and more troops on the ground to ensure total security," stated Adewuyi. Adewuyi added that the UNAMID presence has made a difference (especially with an added depth of activities including firewood patrols, tribal chief meetings, and long-range patrols,) but that it is difficult to patrol a vast area where weapons are just floating around and people have a warrior-mentality."

DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY

15. (SBU) In Mukjar, Gambian civpol chief Ahmed Abd Al-Aziz gave a glowing review of the area under his control (using the much cited UNAMID phrase "stable, but unpredictable"), while a brief visit to the nearby IDP camp revealed a much different perception. Tribal elder Zakariah Kojer told emboff in the IDP camp that the situation within the camps is not secure, as they are restricted to the camps and that within them there are occasional robberies, attacks, and rapes. Kojer complained that the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement had not done anything for the region, and said that while the UNAMID presence has helped, it has not completely solved Darfur's lack of security. UNAMID civpol repeatedly interrupted the tribal chief attempting to lead his answers and eventually said to emboff, "He [the Tribal Chief IDP] doesn't know what he is talking about."

JANJAWEED INTEGRATED INTO SECURITY AND ABOVE THE LAW

16. (SBU) Almost all UNAMID representatives expressed concern about the continued presence of janjaweed, their "free reign over the camps," and their status above the law. Hisham Rashid, an Egyptian civpol in Zalingi, stated that they recently conducted an investigation that provided strong evidence for and led to the arrest of one former Arab militia member. Rashid stated that they followed the standard procedure of turning the accused over to the Sudanese police, but that the suspect was transferred from police station to police station, never tried, and eventually released. "This isn't the first case of where someone close to the government avoids a criminal sentence," stated Rashid.

17. (SBU) Gambian civpol in Mukjar told emboffs that the janjaweed have been fully incorporated into the police reserve and other government security forces such as border units. Abdelaziz stated that on one recent patrol his men stopped an armed man riding a camel. Abdelaziz reported that the man was dressed in the style

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typical of janjaweed fighters and carrying an AK-47, but that he produced two official IDs, one for the border police and another for the Sudanese Armed Forces.

18. (SBU) Mukjar base commander T. Kareiou reported that during the last three weeks he has witnessed an influx of Arab militiamen in Toyota landcruisers traveling west - towards Chad - through his area of control. "These cars are going westward and are not coming back," stated Kareiou. He stated that the Zalinji-Garsila and Kubum-Mukjar roads have been particularly busy. He added that these vehicles bypass required government checkpoints and that when they do stop, they interact with the guards at the checkpoints in a collegial way.

COMMENT

19. (SBU) The visits revealed the need for continued follow-up by emboffs to assess the actual the situation in these more remote areas - and the extent to which UNAMID is unable to fulfill its mandate. Many of the camps we visited revealed that outside observers had a poor understanding of the conflict, were quick to simplify its complex tribal and ethnic dimensions, or prone to sugar-coat their reporting in order to please superiors. (The one exception to this was the locally-employed Sudanese language consultants who appeared to understand the complex ethnic and social dynamics around them. UNAMID could consider expanding the use of local Sudanese staff, not only for menial jobs, but for more analyst positions at the bases.)

20. Comment continued: The reports of the integration of janjaweed into Sudanese security structures, their free reign and display of firepower in areas they once terrorized, and their avoidance of Sudanese judicial systems is nothing new. This fact demonstrates the actual intentions of the Khartoum regime on the ground in Darfur to keep its forces intact and its allies happy, and continues in the face of UNAMID and over two years after the signing of the DPA, which included security provisions (e.g. articles 24-27) designed to disarm and demobilize the janjaweed.

FERNANDEZ